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ABSTRACT

This paper provides a critique of the culture of self-regulation in higher education, in the context of recent public concerns about accountability in higher education. It discusses the role of the professor within academe, the role of tenure in protecting academic freedom, and the need to address issues of faculty accountability. It then examines institutional accountability, citing the economist Adam Smith's concept of the need for external ethical constraint, and focusing on the special burden of accountability and self-regulation faced by public colleges and universities. In discussing the question of tenure, it notes that in some cases tenure has been used to protect faculty who are guilty of ethical improprieties, such as creating a hostile environment for or economic exploitation of graduate students. The paper recommends that professional organizations in the field of speech communication develop professional codes of ethics, and that such codes address principles related to the responsibilities of faculty in their relationship to students, to other faculty, to the university, to the discipline, and to society as a whole. A suggested preliminary code of ethics for graduate education is appended. (Contains 41 references.) (MDM)

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Accountability and External Ethical Constraints in Academia

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Southern Illinois University at Carbondale

Paper presented at the 1996 Annual Meeting of the

Illinois Speech and Theatre Association, Oakbrook, IL

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Abstract

In recent years there has been much public debate on issues related to accountability in higher education. Much of this debate has centered on fiscal responsibility, yet institutions of higher education have been asked by state legislatures to make an accounting of their efforts. This position paper critiques the culture of self-regulation in higher education. The critique is based on the presumption of need for external ethical constraint in human institutions as implied in the philosophy of Adam Smith. This paper examines current social trends toward accountability in academia, and provides two examples of processes needing external ethical constraint: tenure and graduate education. This paper specifies the role of the institution and the discipline in maintaining ethical standards, sets general principles and makes recommendations for establishing professional codes of ethics.

Accountability and External Ethical Constraints in Academia

Quintillian described the ethical teacher as a good man (sic) speaking well (Institutes of Oratory, Book XII). It is required, as Quintillian argued (Book II, Chapter II; cited in Bizzell & Herzburg, 1990, p. 299), that educators have ". . . neither vices in himself (sic), nor tolerate them in others." Quintillian, in teaching us to be good teachers, emphasized the important role of ethics in education. As teachers, we are communicators, but are we ethical? To be good teachers we must ask ourselves about the role ethics plays in our vocation. The question regarding ethics in academia dates back at least as far as Socrates and Plato.

Plato had many debates with the sophists about the nature of rhetoric and the ethical responsibilities of the teacher. These debates centered primary on the nature of the good. The sophists taught that the good was dependent upon context because the knowledge of truth could at best be only provisional (Bizzell & Herzburg, 1990). For Plato, the good was an absolute, an ideal, which persisted outside of the contingencies of individual existence. Indeed, Plato argued that the teacher, with a passion for wisdom and knowledge, will be one who desires all wisdom (The Republic, v. 475), and therefore truth (vi. 501). The goal of the teacher in the academy is to turn "the eye of the soul" toward the good (vii. 518).

Indeed, the academy was created to educate leaders to rule benevolently. To achieve that goal, the student had to be motivated toward to good. The teacher, therefore, had a role to turn the student toward the good through the process of education, and the academy as a place for teachers to practice the art of education, should become a community of educators with the same goal toward the good. The fact that this was not the case, that Plato was having his debate with the teachers of his day who were, from Plato's perspective, not turning students toward to good,

seems to have been forgotten. Somewhere along the way it seems the debate regarding the role of ethics in education was lost when an assumption that the teacher was inherently ethical became part of the culture of academe. Apparently the creation of a culture of academe has been based upon three assumptions: (a) that actors are internally motivated, (b) that learning creates internal motivation toward the good, and (c) that the academy's social role of educating leaders and citizens requires and therefore creates internal motivation toward the good within the community of educators and the institution itself. The current existence of institutions of higher education supposedly constituted without external ethical constraints is based upon those assumptions. Is it the case that institutions of higher education have held themselves unaccountable to an external public?

In recent years, the question of public accountability for education has come to the forefront. A public perception persists that academic institutions have not acted in a fiscally responsible manner. However, the critiques go deeper than fiscal management to the nature of the institution itself. Questions regarding the role of academia in society have been broached, as well as the importance of ethics in the classroom. These questions get at the very heart of the purpose of education. They question the long-assumed relationship between ethics and academia.

It is interesting to observe that these questions are being raised by the citizenry. For example, questions regarding the tenure system have been raised in the public sphere through the media, in state and national legislatures, and by college boards (Guernsey, 1996; Haworth, 1996; Mangan, 1996; Manger, 1996). The nature of these questions about tenure have revolved around whether educators should be given permanent job security through the tenure system and whether such a system protects educators from public accountability. Academicians have expressed reservations about altering the tenure system; some academicians have even suggested

that no changes be made to the tenure system whatsoever (Friedland, 1996; Gellman, 1996; Mathiesen, 1996). The arguments offered by educators for protecting tenure recall the purpose of tenure: to protect educators right of free inquiry from the pressures of an external public.

As we attempt to balance the necessity for free inquiry with our responsibility to be ethical to the external public, the debate continues and continues to bring changes to the very structure of academe. To be sure, several examples of major changes to the structure of academe are currently occurring. For example, one major change involves revision to tenure policies nationwide. The revised policy on tenure at the University of North Dakota system allows tenured faculty to be terminated, not only for incompetence, but also for repeatedly receiving poor reviews (Magner, 1996). The state of Texas is also considering a bill which would allow universities to fire tenured faculty who receive two consecutive years of poor reviews by students and peer faculty (Mangan, 1996). These changes are occurring to appease a public that is wary of the economic justification for permanent job security, the increasing cost of higher education, and the scandal of being above public scrutiny.

To appease the public, tenure is being re-examined for changes and possible elimination across the country. BusinessWeek commented that tenure lessens accountability (1996, October 21, available online October 6, 1996), and thus should be phased out. Others believe that modest changes such as a post-tenure review process should be implemented. Some educators and civic leaders believe that the purpose of the post-tenure review process is to assure that faculty function at the highest possible level (Guernsey, 1996). Accordingly, this process could make it easier to fire faculty who receive poor reviews or to apply disciplinary action for misconduct (Haworth, 1996). The questions we must ask ourselves as educators as we debate tenure and

public accountability are (a) how do we continue to protect academic freedom and free inquiry, and (b) with this freedom, how do we uphold ethical standards and conduct.

Other issues regarding public accountability include how institutions report productivity data such as job placement and graduation rates (Lovett, 1995), how institutions protect against research misconduct (Ryan, 1996), and how institutions meet specific goals (Schmidt, 1996). Each of these issues require consideration of the ethical ramifications of institutional action. The public, the press and the federal government have called for accountability in higher education, and this call questions the practices of higher education from an ethical standpoint. These questions have marred the image of higher education as an environment fostering the quest for truth and wisdom. Enhancing the image of higher education can be accomplished by measures of accountability such as increasing the accuracy of institutional data reported for purposes of college ranking. One method to secure such accuracy would be to require a common data set which would standardize the collection of data (Rothkopf, 1996). State governing boards can institute such standards to assist in the setting of policy and reporting to constituencies.

Currently, in the state of Illinois, the Board of Higher Education is conducting a statewide review of graduate programs. The stated purpose of the statewide review is to determine if universities are cost effective in their graduate education programs. The Board is also interested in determining if duplication of programs exists within the state and whether such duplication can be justified given job prospects for graduates with advanced degrees. The Board has called the question whether it is ethical to continue to support graduate programs with taxpayer money when those graduate programs are economically and academically unjustifiable. To accomplish the review, the Board has asked universities to examine their programs to determine if those programs meet certain criteria as well as meet the overall mission of the university. Throughout

the process questions have been raised regarding research institutions' emphases on graduate education at the expense of undergraduate education. Apparently the public wants to know, through the Board, the justification for graduate education. Interestingly, what is occurring in Illinois is not uncommon in other states throughout the country.

Yet, dangers do exist in holding institutions of higher education publicly accountable. Certainly educators are more expert in the needs and processes of the academy. To assert the requirement of public accountability through the use of citizen boards who are charged with the responsibility of making and implementing policies for internal educational processes is problematical. However, political groups do attempt to take on that responsibility. For example, the Republican Party platform blames colleges for the rising cost of tuition and for "political correctness" which is forced upon colleges by accrediting bodies and "impedes the ability of the faculty to teach" (Burd, 1996, p. A46). Implied in that statement is the assumption that the Republican Party knows what is better for education than educators.

In Illinois, as in many other states, the Board of Higher Education sets policy for state colleges and universities. Membership on this board is made through political appointment. The requirements of state politics demand a public accountability (or at least an accountability to a political party which makes the appointment). This public wants answers regarding the policies of higher education. Recently, Ross A. Hodel, deputy director of the Illinois Board of Higher Education, stressed the need to educate the public through clear reporting by colleges, especially on college costs. He suggested that reports should not be too complicated and laden with jargon. According to Hodel, "People are looking for a simple measure. They have tried to include in this simple measure all the exceptions to the rule. When you do that, pretty soon people forget what

the rule is. They would just like to know how long it takes a kid to graduate" (Lively, 1995, p. B3).

Simple measures, although an appropriate way of informing the public, often hide the complexities of a system. When public policy is set based upon the simple measures, items of importance often are left out. For example, several states are instituting performance-based funding measures (Schmidt, 1996). How is the performance of institutions measured, particularly when considering distinctions between research and academic institutions? Is it measured by cost-effectiveness, as is implied in the Illinois statewide review? How do we compare a program in one discipline against a program in another when one is inherently more costly than the other? How is quality measured and measured in a standardized way across programs and universities? Performance in terms of cost-effectiveness may be a simple measure that can be easily understood by a taxpaying public, but does simplifying the measure for the purpose of increasing understanding do justice to the public when it harms an institution that was created the serve the public in the first place?

The methods by which an institution may be held publicly accountable are also problematical. As suggested above, boards of higher education are often created through political appointments. Such political appointments create a conflict of interest for the state in that the policies specified by the board may have more to do with the desires of a political party as opposed to what is good for education. The effects of board politics on education has been observed in many states. As reported by Spencer (1996), the Association of Governing Boards of Colleges and Universities has complained that the practice of political appointment to college governing boards has become a major impediment to higher education.

The current debate on accountability in academia must consider the balance between the needs of the educational process to be free from political hegemony and the needs of the society to be free from the hegemonic tendencies of institutions of higher education. With freedom and rights come responsibility. One responsibility for academe is to live up to its purpose of educating for the betterment of society. To meet this responsibility may require external ethical constraint.

Adam Smith and External Ethical Constraint

The issue of institutional accountability to the public can be considered from a Smithian perspective. Adam Smith implied in his economic theory the need for external ethical constraint. He believed that free enterprise should not be controlled by the government, but that capitalists left unregulated would abuse economic power. Smith perceived the economy of his time as consumers subsidizing producers in a system of centralized (and thus authoritarian) political structures. He created his system of political economy while understanding that concentrated economic resources could be readily translated into political influence (Bassiry & Jones, 1993). In short, producers with monopolies on a product could dictate public policies which are in their own best interest and not in the interest of the public.

To combat such self-interest of industry, steps should be taken to protect the consumer against the moral hazard of producer self-interest. Moral hazard exists because the producer has access to resources or expertise to which the consumer is attempting to gain access. The producer may be motivated by self-interest to the detriment of the client or to the public good. The avoidance of moral hazard requires that any form of regulation, such as a code of ethics, should protect the consumer and the public from abuses of producer self-interest (Jamal & Bowie, 1995).

Smith was highly critical of government regulation of industry particularly if those regulations were developed by the industry. Such self-regulation suffers from a severe conflict of interest. However, the government should be involved in regulating industry for the good of consumers. Smith believed that the role of government should be strictly limited to services that enhance the public good, such as administration of justice, and impartial administration of justice is necessary for individual liberty to be maintained (de Vries, 1989). Institutions, motivated by self-interest, seek to protect themselves from competitors without restraint and thus harm the public good (Smith, 1976). This implies that industry should be regulated through external ethical constraint.

In very many ways higher education is like industry. Institutions of higher education produce an educated populace, and thus have product. Individuals who seek to be educated are consumers of the product. Yet the product of higher education reaches beyond the educated individual to the society as a whole. An educated populace is a benefit to society. In fact, democracy demands an educated populace. Smith believed society should and must educate itself through public institutions (Smith, 1976).

Institutions of higher education are also like industry in that they can create monopolies. Monopolies between and among institutions can and do exist. The academy (institutions of higher education taken as a whole) has a monopoly on educating the public. The academy itself has fought certain types of external regulation, such as external regulation of tenure, on the premise that educators know what is best for education, and thus for the public. To be sure, institutions must adhere to public laws and regulations, but in most cases the institution is allowed to police itself. Institutions are charged with maintaining codes of ethics. This charge becomes problematical when one considers the structure of the modern institution.

An institution is a complex system made of many separate entities. Most institutions have many separate colleges and schools, and within those colleges and schools are departments. Outside of academic units are service units and administrative units. Institutions typically have internal policies which regulate the activities of the institutional community. Examples of this type of over-arching policies include employee handbooks and student codes. However, even within these groupings policies differ, and often have separate documents, for each type of employee or student. Policies differ for faculty as opposed to administrative staff and civil service employees. Policies also differ for undergraduate, graduate and professional students. These differences in policy between groups may be justified but demonstrate difficulties in the administration of justice.

A similar situation exists for academic units. Colleges may specify their own policies which regulate their unique contexts. Departments do likewise. All units are expected to set policy which is consistent with university policy and with public law and regulation. In some cases, the university performs the duty of enforcing the public law across campus. For example, the university enforces the law regarding the training of employees on issues of sexual harassment and discrimination. In most cases, the university leaves the setting and enforcing of policy to the individual units.

Individual units, such as departments, are not left completely to their own whims in setting policy. Accrediting bodies often specify policies to which units must adhere to gain accreditation. Even in those cases, however, the accrediting body relies upon departmental self-report to determine if the department has followed its guidelines. It is common practice for universities to require and engage in period reviews. These periodic reviews often include both internal and external review teams. The internal review teams usually consists of faculty from

other departments within the university, whereas the external review team usually consists of faculty members from other institutions not directly associated with the university. However, these external review teams typically involve faculty from the same discipline as the department or program under review.

These reviews are often required by accrediting bodies, state boards, trustees, or by university policy. The structure of the review, containing both internal and external review teams, is designed to check the for the motivation behind self-report. The doling of resources by the university may be contingent upon the results of the review. Therefore, it is in the interest of the department to conduct such reviews, although it is also in the department's interest to have a positive review. Yet, even with this review structure, reviews ultimately still are dependent upon self-report and are conducted by educators whose self-interest is to protect education from the budget ax. These reviews are based upon an honor system, a system that expects educators to be honest, and thus ethical, about that which potentially can affect negatively their own vocation.

These endeavors at critical self-analysis and self-regulation demonstrate academe's attempts to maintain the delicate balance between the needs of the educational process and the needs of society. These endeavors also demonstrate the practical working out of the assumption that the educator would be internally motivated toward the good and thus ethical or that the community of educators would be inherently ethical. It is the practical working out of the maintenance of that balance that is questioned here. The proof of whether the assumptions regarding internal motivation toward the good hold true lies in the everyday experience of the consumers of the industry of higher education.

The Case of Tenure and Graduate Education

The questions regarding tenure revolve around accountability or responsibility for behaviors in and out of the classroom. The purpose for tenure was to protect the faculty members academic freedom. That protection is a necessary function; otherwise the ideal of the academy as a place where the free debate of ideas for the overall advancement of knowledge could not be achieved. Without such protections the integrity of the academic enterprise could be not guaranteed. "Academic freedom is the freedom of a teacher to state the truth as he or she sees it without fear of losing her or his position or otherwise being punished for the views expressed" (McCroskey, 1990, pp. 471-472). Many academicians believe that tenure, and thus by extension academic freedom, must be protected at all cost. As Daley (1996) wrote, "Neither the protection provided by tenure nor the threat of tenure denial should be used to stifle dissent. Also, academic freedom must be used only for its intended purposes. Academic freedom is not an end in itself. It exists to encourage innovative research and the transmission of new knowledge through teaching. Failure to use academic freedom for its intended purposes undermines its raison d'être" (p. B3).

Yet other academicians believe that tenure either should be eliminated or restructured to serve the original purpose of protecting academic freedom only. According to Levi (1995), "This means that tenure cannot be used as a reward for good behavior or even good work. If incentives are needed, raises, promotions, sabbaticals, and other perks must suffice. Tenure, however, must be given automatically to any faculty member who has served more than two to three years at the same institution" (p. B3). With such a system, tenure my serve as job security protecting academic freedom but not ethical misconduct, malfeasance, or negligence.

Ingrid Gadway Clarke, Director of the University Ombudsman Office at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale (personal communication, 1996) stated that since she has been director,

from 1974 to the present, only one case against a tenured faculty member resulted in forced retirement. In that case, gross negligence occurred including one incident involving obstructing a student with disabilities from accessing educational opportunities. In her opinion, tenure has protected faculty guilty of ethical improprieties. Tenured faculty are censured or fired for only two types of offenses: (a) serious or gross sexual harassment, and (b) economic exploitation of students (see the Southern Illinois University at Carbondale Employee Handbook,).

On the other hand, using tenure as an argument for job security in cases of malfeasance or unethical behavior is questionable. In these cases, there is no direct accountability for inappropriate behavior outside of the academy when a faculty member has tenure. The student-teacher relationship is defined by a power differential, and with this power differential comes the potential for abuse. Cases of abuse of power within an academic department have been documented (Craig & LeBlanc, 1996). In these cases, graduate students have little recourse but to "duck their heads" and get through their programs. If a graduate student, or non-tenured faculty member, blows the whistle on tenured faculty for inappropriate behavior, such an action could ultimately negatively affect their career in academia, through negative evaluations, recommendations, and obstacles to success. Tenure was meant to protect freedom of speech in academia; it was not meant to protect faculty from accountability for inappropriate behaviors, such as creating a hostile environment.

A hostile environment occurs when one group of voices are privileged over others. It is this privileging of certain voices which creates a hostile environment and is a form of abuse of power. In the Craig and LeBlanc study (1996), both students and faculty were interviewed. These individuals felt that they were silenced by the department environment which privileged certain voices over others. Interviewees believed that negative consequences would occur if they shared

their true feelings and opinions about the department or even subject matter germane to the topic of academic discussion. The effect of the silencing is a reinforcement of the abuse of power of the privileged.

Another form of abuse of power occurs when rules are differentially applied, particularly when by doing so provides gains to the individual regulating behavior through the enforcement of rules. Rules differentially applied (RDA) allows for advancement of "provincial" ends at the cost of fairness to all. For example, when a departmental administrator allows students within a particular area of studies to have access to information which enhances their professional development while denying the same access to other students, such behavior unfairly penalizes the "unprivileged" students. Or, when students in one area of study are held accountable for violation of unwritten and/or unspoken rules of which they can have no access, while other students in another area of study within the same department are allowed or even actively encouraged to behave in the same manner for their own benefit, then the practice of RDA is a form of abuse of power and is unethical.

The existence of RDA points to an inherent unfairness in the differential treatment of persons of the same or similar status. In the case of students in an academic department, such unfairness can lead to career advantages for some and obstacles for others. It is unreasonable to expect that individuals within a department will not talk about their department environment. Individuals use discourse to construct meaning about their situation. As Sias (1996) points out, conversations about differential treatment serve to both create and reinforce personal perceptions of differential treatment. Such perceptions can lead to feelings of resentment which can only stymie the education process and help create negative images of the organization or discipline

(see Treadwell & Harrison, 1994). Individuals who feel differentially treated may desire to speak out about unfairness.

Yet, the attitude toward whistle-blowers within a department, within a discipline and even within academia itself may disallow individuals speaking critically about problems within a department. Gouran uses the terms "malcontent," "inveterate gossip," and "dirt dispenser" to describe individuals within departments who speak out about departmental problems or "dirty linen" (Phillips, Gouran, Kuehn, & Wood, 1994). The use of these terms, especially within the context of giving advice to "academics," actively discourages speaking critically about unethical behaviors, including rules differentially applied. Furthermore, such advice, corroborated by Wood (see Phillips, et al., 1994, pp. 92-93), gives the impression that individuals that complain are not to be trusted as telling the "truth." This advice is especially problematical when one considers that this publication was sponsored by the national professional association—the Speech Communication Association. The rule being applied may be phrased as ". . . be loyal to your colleagues no matter what they do," or ". . . do not question the powers that be."

Baxter (1993) contends that the difference between "talking things through" and "putting it in writing" is the difference in a culture of collegiality versus a culture which ensures the rights and responsibility of its members. While the tendency within academic departments is perhaps to opt for the collegial mode, there are several weaknesses to this mode. In particular, when the community consists of members of differing status, those differences may allow for differential treatment. In the case of an academic department, status differences occur between tenured and non-tenured faculty and between faculty and students. In practice, these status differences disallow certain members full participation in the life of the department (i.e., policy decisions).

Also, when the culture of the organization disallows talk against the organization, that disallowance silences members who may feel they have been treated unfairly.

To counter unfair treatment, institutions typically have procedures for redress of grievances. I personally have been involved in the grievance hearing process in four different capacities: (a) as a defendant when a student filed a grade grievance against me based on my attendance policy, (b) as a plaintiff when I filed a grievance against a professor for grading policies, and against a department for hostile work environment issues, (c) as a hearing board officer in a case involving a grade grievance by a graduate student, and (d) as an advisor to a plaintiff when a student filed a grievance against a professor for unfair treatment. In these cases, the student was responsible for understanding all policies regarding the grievance issue as well as the grievance procedure. When a student believes that he or she has been wronged, the student is often left to his or her own devices to seek redress. The department itself may be motivated not to teach policy or to give incorrect information to students in order to avoid having charges brought against it. In a very real sense, not teaching the student about his or her rights regarding faculty abuse of power is one way for faculty to demonstrate loyalty to their department.

The structure of the modern university, with instruction decentralized down to the department level, contributes to the problems of ethical constraint and accountability. Certainly, educators within their own departments know more about the discipline boundaries and expectations than university administration could. However, barring the assumption that educators are inherently motivated to be ethical, as our experience has shown us is a dubious assumption, the requirement of protecting the rights of all university members involves ethical constraint external to the department, and in some cases to the university.

Resolution

In order to resolve the issue of accountability, the university and the discipline itself must become involved in the process of developing and enforcing ethical standards. As Nicotera and Cushman (1992) point out, the organization as a whole must be held accountable as rational agents. The role of the university resides in requiring the maintenance and enforcement of those standards. This can be accomplished by producing written policies that are publicly available. The university should also uphold the requirements of external regulators including government agencies which represent the will of the people, and accrediting bodies which represent the will of the discipline. The university should also hold violators of ethical standards publicly responsible. This requirement includes an end to the practice of sending away troublesome faculty to other institutions with good recommendations, a practice which is fostered by the requirements of tenure.

The university must work with professional organizations which serve as accrediting bodies for the various disciplines. It is incumbent upon national professional organizations to develop professional codes of ethics for the disciplines they serve. These national organizations should work with regional, state and local organizations to guarantee congruence with codes developed. Finally, accreditation of programs should be dependent upon acceptance of the code.

There has been dialogue over recent years at the national convention that the Speech Communication Association should develop and implement a professional code of ethics. If finalized, a Speech Communication Association ratified document of this sort may improve our credibility as a discipline to other disciplines, particularly speech pathology, psychology, sociology, etc. which have ethics standards for their discipline through their organizations (see American Psychological Association, 1992; American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 1994). In an e-mail message to the Executive Director of the Speech Communication

Association, Jim Gaudino, I specified my concerns regarding the status of a professional code of ethics.

> "Related to the issue of discipline credibility are general standards of the discipline for departments and programs which call themselves "communication" programs. The task of specifying discipline boundaries for the purpose of instituting "standards" may be difficult given the broad nature of communication studies. However, I believe it is necessary in order to demonstrate and to define to other disciplines who we are. To be sure, our current debate regarding the name of our association is part of this process. Yet, simply changing our name does not go far enough to meet the perceived expectations of other disciplines in terms of credibility.
>
> As other professional organizations, such as the American Psychological Association, we should not be afraid to take on the responsibility of enforcing the standards specified through documents regarding codes of professional ethics or disciplinary boundaries and definitions. Enforcement might be met through the Speech Communication Association taking on the role of an accrediting agency. Other disciplines do this (particularly the ones which we compare ourselves to when having feelings of academic second class citizen status). It is amazing to me that an organization, like the Speech Communication Association which has been around for some seventy-five years, does not yet have such documents.
>
> I do not know what the overall Speech Communication Association membership's attitudes are toward these issues. However, I believe if we are to

have a meaningful debate about discipline stature, these issues should be addressed" (LeBlanc, personal communication, 1996).

To attain such goals as discipline stature and credibility, as well as the goal of protecting the rights of community members, the general public, and society as a whole, public accountability must be demonstrated. Below I propose some general principles and offer some specific recommendations for attaining an environment in academia which is ethical and publicly accountable.

General Principles

According to Cahn (1994), much has been written about the rights of faculty in higher education, but very little has been written about faculty responsibilities. Participation in a community, such as an academic community, requires responsibility. Such participation involves a social contact which specifies obligations and requirements for respecting the rights of other community members (Grisez & Shaw, 1980). Those other community members include the students. Graduate students, in particular, are in apprenticeship to become educators, and thus full participants and even leaders in that community. The necessity of a social contract for such a community requires a common understanding of responsibilities. Common understanding requires dialogue about the ethics of community membership.

According to Christians and Lambeth (1996), as late as the turn of the twentieth century, university professors taught students moral philosophy. In this century, less emphasis has been placed on the teaching of ethics, and ethics as been relegated to the philosophy department. Courses on practical ethics, though gaining ground have a long way to go to bring back dialogue on the responsibilities of community members in the university and throughout society. If educators are to be ethical, they must be taught to be ethical. That education occurs not only in

the covering of ethical principles in the classroom, but through example shown by faculty. Thus faculty have a responsibility to be ethical, which influences the training of future educators, which affects society as a whole.

"As a member of a profession, an educator is expected to adhere to responsible norms of professional conduct and can be held to those standards by the courts as well as students, parents, teachers and administrators" (Andersen, 1990, p. 462). Speech communication as a discipline should be at the forefront of such discussions regarding the role of the educator and the relationship between the teacher and the student. "The relationship (between faculty and graduate students) presents serious moral questions about responsibility for research, supervision of teaching, joint authorship, and the maintenance of continued contact" (Phillips & Merriam, 1990, p. 488). Education occurs through communication, thus members of our discipline should be about the business of teaching ethics and being ethical. As members of a discipline, we should demonstrate the values in our discipline through the daily practice of our vocation.

"Plato and Aristotle would argue that the basic moral difficulties in an organization are a result of the inadequate values that guide the organization" (Klein, 1989, p. 62). Without a professional code of ethics, organizations cannot educate their members about their obligations to each other, to clients and to the general public. Professional codes of ethics should incorporate three provisions: (a) avoidance of moral hazard, (b) maintenance of professional courtesy, and (c) service to the public interest (Jamal & Bowie, 1995). How we determine standards for issues such as supervision of teaching, responsibility for research, joint authorship rights (Cotrill, 1989), and the maintenance of continued contact needs to be closely examined.

Recommendations

1. Our professional organizations (i.e., the Speech Communication Association, regional and state associations) should develop a professional code of ethics to which members should adhere and are held accountable (see Appendix for a preliminary code of ethics for graduate education).

2. This professional code of ethics should address principles related to the responsibilities of faculty in their relationship to students, to other faculty, to the university, to the discipline, and to society as a whole.

3. Our national professional organization, the Speech Communication Association, should be charged with enforcing this professional code of ethics through the accreditation of departments and programs.

4. The accreditation process should require period review of programs to insure compliance.

5. The accreditation process should require an external review team to investigate the reporting procedures of an academic unit.

6. The findings of the review team should be made public and should be part of the national organizations public reporting of the status of education in the discipline.

7. The national organization should publish a publicly available list with rankings of all undergraduate and graduate programs in the discipline. This list should include which programs are accredited through the national organization.

8. The professional code of ethics for the discipline of speech communication should be made public.

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Author Note

The preliminary code of ethics for graduate education (see Appendix) offered in this paper are based on personal observation of the culture of graduate education as it is practiced at the department level. I believe this preliminary code should be part of the dialogue on the establishment of a professional code of ethics for the discipline of speech communication. I would like to acknowledge the assistance of Tom Craig in the development of these recommendations.

Appendix

Preliminary Code of Ethics for Graduate Education

1. A department should allow for the establishment of a departmental student organization whose main goal is to empower graduate students in their role as members of the department. To this end, the organization must serve as a strong voice in matters of department policy which effects graduate students. For this to work, the organization must provide a united front.
2. The organization must serve in a protector role for individual graduate students. Graduate students should not be forced to form alliances with certain faculty and graduate students and against other faculty and graduate students in order to survive.
3. Individual graduate students who have grievances against a faculty member(s) should not fear reprisal for speaking out. This can only be accomplished through a group of united voices: divided voices have no power. To accomplish this, department policy should allow student groups to provide for a grievance committee comprised of at least one member from each of the departmental academic areas, perhaps the area representative, at least two masters students, and two ad hoc members, for a total of at least six. The role of the committee is not to judge the legitimacy of the complaint, but only to approach the administration of the department for purposes of redress.
4. The student organization should be granted full responsibility for the design, planning and implementation of a departmental graduate orientation.
5. The student organization should take on the responsibility of voicing student concerns on a regular and timely basis.

6. The student organization should publish a student guide to classes and instructors, as well as offer peer-mentoring guidance on the establishing of academic and research (dissertation, thesis, and research report) committees.

7. The student organization should publish a guide to professional ethics which includes expectations of appropriate behavior for students and faculty.

8. The student organization should maintain rights to full vote on all matters of department policy which affects graduate students.

9. The student organization should be granted the right of collective bargaining on issues of department policy which effects graduate students.

10. The student organization should be granted the right to appeal department decisions of any sort which demonstrate unfair or differential treatment of any graduate student, whether that treatment is in the student's favor or not.

11. The student organization should demand, and be granted, a written statement of department policies, particularly those which supersede graduate school and university policies. Written department policies should address the following:

    a. Course grading: How grading will be conducted should be explicitly written in the course syllabus, and faculty should be held accountable for following grading guidelines.

    b. Non-academic requirements should not be part of the grading of the course.

    c. Guidelines for the appointment of teaching assistants should be clear, fair and consistently administered.

    d. Guidelines for appointment of summer teaching assistantships should be clear, fair and consistent.

e. Guidelines for appointment of research and administrative assistantships should be clear, fair and consistent.

f. The appointment of research assistantships should be equalized by area.

g. The appointment of administrative assistantships should specify that only administrative duties will be conducted. Administrative assistants should not be involved in assisting faculty with research.

h. The allocation of funds for equipment and space should be equalized by area of study.

i. The allocation of funds for research endeavors, including convention presentations for faculty and students, should be equalized by area of study.

j. The amount of funds allocated to each area for purposes of equipment, space and research endeavors, as well as for research assistantships, should be made public. Any department member should be allowed to question unequal distribution of funds. Individuals responsible for the allocation of funds should be held publicly accountable for misappropriation, unequal allocation, or misrepresentation regarding the allocation of funds.

k. The allocation of tenure decisions should be equalized by area of study.

l. If the direction the department is heading is toward highlighting and emphasizing one area of study (at the expense of the other areas, thus making the need for equalization of resources irrelevant, i. e. f, h, i, j & k), then that fact needs to be publicly acknowledged, and steps must be taken to insure that applicants to the department, both graduate student applicants and faculty applicants, are fully aware of the department's intentions.

m. As per l above, course offerings that are actually available on a regular and timely basis, within a two year cycle, should be reflected in the graduate catalog. Courses which do not meet the time criterion should be removed from the graduate catalog.

n. The specific departmental course requirements need to be addressed: an introductory course to the discipline should demonstrate its stated goal of preparing the student for the research process and membership in academe. This can only be accomplished by structuring the course content to meet that stated goal and requiring the course at the beginning of the masters program. The goals and purposes of an introductory course to the discipline as a required course need to be publicly stated and written, these goals must be in alignment with the department course offerings, its research thrust and the direction of the discipline as a whole. If the purpose is to well round the student, then course offerings in each of the areas should be required or the requirement of such an introductory course should be released.

o. Faculty should not tell students not to work with certain other faculty.

p. Enforcement of the 5/10/15 enrollment requirements rule should not be differentially applied.

q. Specific guidelines for standards of conduct in student/teacher relationships should be publicly stated and written. These guidelines should encourage mentoring and collaboration on research endeavors, but should place specific boundaries on what is appropriate in personal relationships between students and faculty. Department members who differentially apply student/teacher relationship standards should be held publicly accountable.

r. Open class discussion should be allowed. Minimally at the graduate level, open disagreement with faculty should be allowed, and not penalized through grading procedures.

s. If support for a diversity of opinions, values, research interests and methodologies, is a stated goal of the department, then that goal must be practiced in actuality. To this end, no voices should be privileged, all voices should be heard, and care must be taken not to allow the assumptions of sociological categorization (by class, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, commuter status, disability, religion, political affiliation, etc.), or the history of persons or classes to take precedence over the humanity of the other. All persons, regardless of category, whether we as individuals want to accept the pain of others or not, have experienced otherness as other. That experience should be publicly acknowledged.

t. Community aspects of the department notwithstanding, department members should not be held accountable, in terms of esteem or privilege, for participation in social events. The department must publicly acknowledge that individuals, who are members of the department by choice, may have needs which are incongruent with expectations of social participation. For example, department members should not be held accountable for non-participation in social gatherings of department members at bars. Some members may have difficulties with participation in those settings due to allergies to smoke, hearing loss, commuter status, issues regarding the consumption of alcohol, obligations to family, etc. Care should be taken to include all department members in social gatherings and plans for social gatherings. However, participation

in such social gatherings should not be a requirement of department membership, esteem or privilege.

u. Although the department may publish a graduate handbook regarding the policies for graduate study, which includes direction for course requirements, twenty-four hour review, preliminary examinations, and committee requirements, the specific requirements must be carefully and explicitly written. In the case of prelims, specific guidelines specifying the appropriate content areas of questions, the range of expectations for the answering of questions, including length and breadth of answers, and the expectations of committee members regarding written responses to the preliminary questions need to be addressed. The appropriateness of questions in terms of rigor, domain, and time criteria should be addressed through a panel of students. In the case of preliminary exam completion and passing, the specific guidelines regarding responsibility for notification to the graduate school should be made explicit. All paperwork required for completion of the degree requirements, along with the procedural instructions for paperwork and the completion of degree requirements, need to be explicitly written.